



INNOVATION AWARD

JVC Everio with removable Microdrive

In many ways, the two Everio Microdrive cameras from JVC are what the video market has been waiting for – a practical alternative to tape. And with even larger capacity Microdrives than the initial 4GB versions imminent, the format promises a great deal.

A Microdrive is a removable hard drive form of recording. It offers picture quality comparable with that of MPEG2 DVD cams, but due to the size of the drive the product is much more compact than DVD.

JVC is currently the only manufacturer to use this format and has unveiled two camcorders in its Everio Microdrive range. The GZ-MC100 and GZ-MC200 share exactly the same specification, differing only in design. The format is being touted as a new concept in digital media cameras, and an indication to the future of home moviemaking.



The Microdrive itself is just 1.5in square, and can be inserted and removed from the camera easily. It is also possible to remove the Microdrive and insert it into a card reader connected to a PC. We say PC, because the new Microdrives (which use MPEG2 compression) are not Mac-compatible – an issue being addressed currently by Apple and JVC.

The Everio range is capable of a maximum video resolution of 720 x 576 and at a maximum transfer rate of 8.5Mbps (megabits per second). These figures are translated into an ultra mode on the camera, which will see users being able to store 60 minutes of video on the supplied 4GB Microdrive.

Also nominated

Sony HDR-FX1 ■

Sony's consumer high-definition camcorder.
Reviewed issue #198

Samsung VP-D6050i ■

Digital cam and powerful 5.25 megapixel digital still camera in one – but with two lenses!
Reviewed issue #196

BEST COMPACT CAMCORDER

Sony DCR-HC40

The HC40 is one of those camcorders you just know you're going to like. From the compact, sleek and ergonomic design to the features list that plays to the enthusiast crowd with its manual controls and computer friendly connections – it's a great cam.

The camcorder features DV-in/out, AV-in/out, S-video in/out, USB output and an external microphone jack. It also throws in LANC control, a 10x optical zoom, 2.5in touchscreen LCD, megapixel stills and the ability to create MPEG4 video clips. And Sony has managed to do all this in a package that weighs a measly 0.46kg and measures just 50 x 92 x 112mm (w x h x d).

High scores were recorded across the board in our test, with our reviewer remarking on particularly vibrant colours, full of punch and vigour. Test material also exhibited a very high level of fine detail – great for those close-ups – and was free from shimmer or jitter. The sensible location of controls meant that handling and motor noise were not a problem. In fact, so good is the HC40 that we were left wondering how Sony – or anyone else – could top it!

Also nominated

Canon MVX35i ■

Excellent performance from this fully-featured upright mini DV cam.
Reviewed issue #197

JVC GR-DZ7 ■

2 megapixel-capable mini DV cam, with a range of manual features and sockets.
Reviewed issue #195



'The HC40 is easy to hold, and delivers the type of images and functionality needed to make a successful digital camcorder. It's already set a benchmark for compact DV cams in 2004'
reviewed issue #190